



WISE COUNTY CLERK OF CIRCUIT COURT

Jack Kennedy

July 21, 2011

Chairman Julius Genachowski
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

I appreciate the Commission's solicitation of public comments and would like to add my view to the discussion surrounding Docket No. 11-65, the AT&T/T-Mobile merger.

As the Clerk of Court for Wise County since 1995, when the Internet was in its infancy, I have taken special pride in my support of emerging technology. In fact more than a decade ago, I spearheaded Virginia's first Web-based land records and index system here in far Southwestern Virginia. The mark of my tenure as Clerk has been the modernization of judicial administration through the use of digital information technology tools enabling on premise and remote users to access public information.

To my dismay, however, Wise County has always been behind the curve as far as technology goes. Building out infrastructure here in the Appalachian Mountains simply is not the highest priority for most carriers. Those that have made an effort still don't provide very reliable service. Our residents and businesses in many ways still live in isolation by comparison to most Americans.

But what is intriguing about this deal is that AT&T intends to devote billions of dollars over the next several years to reaching places like Wise. I cannot describe to you what this would mean for our local economic development. It would help to retain and create many jobs around here and add to the quality of life through distance learning opportunities, telemedicine, e-marketing, and so on.

AT&T and T-Mobile's spectrum positions will make for quick network integration and efficiency amid the coming spectrum crunch. If the deal moves along as planned, the arrival of a truly mobile internet will change Wise County remarkably. I'm all for that if the Commission sees it fit.

Sincerely,

The Honorable J. Jack Kennedy, Jr.
Wise County Clerk of Court

CC: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Robert McDowell
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn